

## **REMARKS**

In supplement to the Amendment/Reply filed December 29, 2008 in response to the Office Action mailed July 1, 2008, please consider the following remarks:

### **Status of Claims**

In applicants' Preliminary Amendment filed November 17, 2003, claims 1-26 were canceled without prejudice, claim 27 was amended, claim 28 was retained as originally filed, and claims 29-39 were introduced. Claims 27-39 were canceled and claims 40-41 were added in the Amendment filed January 17, 2007. Claims 40-41 were amended May 16, 2008 and claim 42 was added December 29, 2008. Claims 40-42 are canceled herein. New claim 43 has been added corresponding to claims 41 and 42 (and original claim 28), but setting forth with specificity a preferred embodiment of the combination assay as described, e.g., at application page 23. In particular, support for the newly added claim (the only currently pending claim upon entry of this amendment) can be obtained from page 23, lines 1-9:

Also, it should be noted that the monoclonal antibodies of the present invention may be utilized in a combination assay which detects: 1) antigens, such as those described above (e.g., p24 and p26) and 2) antibodies to HIV (by use of, for example, envelope antigens (e.g., HIV-1 group M and O gp41 and HIV-2 gp36). Any such combination assay, which utilizes the monoclonal antibodies of the present invention, is considered to be within the scope of the invention.

Accordingly, no new matter has been added as a result of these amendments.

## CONCLUSION

The application is considered in good and proper form for allowance. Applicants believe they have addressed all the rejections in the Office communication. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject patent application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lou, et al.

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